

A SPECIAL EDITION OF **WWD**

BEAUTYINC



GREAT SKIN

THE **100 BEST SKIN CARE PRODUCTS** OF ALL TIME

gold standard



THE DEFINITIVE ROUNDUP OF THE 100 GREATEST SKIN CARE PRODUCTS
AS CHOSEN BY THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW BEST — BEAUTY INDUSTRY INSIDERS.

BY **JAMES MANSO** PHOTOGRAPHED BY **DAVID DUNAN**

CeraVe makes selling 20 bottles of Hydrating Facial Cleanser every minute look easy.

But when it comes to skin care, producing lightning-in-a-bottle successes with staying power is anything but.

One of beauty's most dynamic categories, skin care is also one of the most crowded and competitive. It's hard to break through: Circana reports that despite the proliferation of new brands and products, the majority of sales come from existing players.

That makes the 100 winners on these pages — which were voted the greatest skin care products by beauty industry insiders — even more remarkable. Some of the products have withstood the test of time, others are more recent entrants on the scene, but all have combined efficacy, user experience and savvy marketing strategies to achieve hero status.

"Creating an iconic skin care product takes vision, vision as to how someone wants their skin to look and feel" said Jane Hertzmark Hudis, executive group president, the Estée Lauder Cos.

But that's not all. "You need an irresistible texture and sensorial experience, discernable powerful instant and long-term results," Hudis continued, "and a compelling story when you use the product each time that keeps a consumer coming back over and over again."

"It takes patience, passion and never rushing just to make a launch," said Carol Hamilton, L'Oréal USA's group

president of acquisitions and business development.

"The combination of art and science that goes into creating not only the right performance, but the sensorial aspects of a skin care product, is too important to hurry."

Of course, efficacy is essential. "The product has to answer a consumer skin care need and it's got to deliver on results," said Ron Robinson, cosmetic chemist and chief executive officer of BeautyStat. "Then, you need to communicate why there's no replacement for it."

Even so, science alone is no guarantee for success.

"You start with performance and don't compromise on that. Then you layer in the extra goodies," said Hamilton, who likens the final result to a great cocktail. "Performance alone won't create consumer addiction. There's the importance of highly concentrated formulas with a beautiful experience to use."

Then you've got to make sure people know of its existence. "For us it's about finding our niche," said Charlotte Palermينو, cofounder of Dieux whose Instant Angel became an instant sensation on social media and beyond in 2022. "But with the internet, your niche can be millions of people who will actually respond well to a product."

Even as the world has evolved, enabling brands like Dieux to break through, those tenets hold true. "Skin care has become a movement and all generations are part of it," said Hudis. "The momentum of the category spans all ages and the potential upside is extraordinary."

BEAUTYINC
THE GREATEST
SKIN CARE
2024



SkinMedica TNS Advanced Plus Serum \$295

Launched 2020
 Two chambers comprise this product's packaging. Upon use, the brand's growth factors blend with a cocktail of botanicals, marine extracts and peptides.
Results Oriented SkinMedica has sold more than 1 million units since its launch.



Sol De Janeiro Brazilian Bum Bum Cream \$48

Launched 2015
 The cream that launched the premium body care craze. Known for its firming benefits, the formula has guaraná extract, açai oil and cupuaçu butter. Its signature scent has spawned a fragrance business.
Results Oriented One unit is sold every 8 seconds.



Sulwhasoo First Care Activating Serum VI \$89

Launched 1997
 Twenty-three years of research culminated in the latest iteration of Sulwhasoo's star serum, which uses ginseng in addition to the proprietary Lymphanax, a multitasker that takes 500 hours to create.
Results Oriented One bottle is sold every 7 seconds.



Supergoop Unseen Sunscreen SPF 40 \$38

Launched 2018
 This clear gel SPF derives soothing and hydrating benefits from meadowfoam oil, frankincense and red algae.
Results Oriented One tube is sold every 12 seconds.



Supergoop Glow Screen SPF 40 \$45

Launched 2020
 The SPF-makeup hybrid, which now comes in four shades, features sea lavender, cocoa peptides, vitamin B3 and hyaluronic acid.
Results Oriented
 The product, which launched in 2020 weeks before the coronavirus pandemic, became an instant bestseller that's generated more than 12,000 five-star reviews.



Tata Harper Regenerating Cleanser \$88

Launched 2010
 A daily cleansing treatment that includes beta hydroxy acids from white willow bark, it also features apricot microspheres with a slew of botanical extracts and coral clay for a dual-action exfoliation.
Results Oriented Regenerating Cleanser has become one of Tata Harper's bestselling products since its 2010 launch.



Tatcha The Rice Polish \$68

Launched 2012
 Japanese rice powder, papaya enzymes, silk and Tatcha's proprietary Hadasei-3 fuel this formula, which drew inspiration from a Japanese beauty ritual called komenukabukuro.
Results Oriented One unit is sold every 15 minutes.



Tammy Fender Epi-Peel \$85

Launched 2004
 A combination of kaolin clay, spearmint and Moroccan rosemary lessens pore appearance and increases circulation.
Results Oriented The formula encapsulates all of Earth's elements — oceans, minerals and flower essences.



The Ordinary Niacinamide 10% + Zinc 1% \$6

Launched 2016
 Meant to regulate sebum production for oily skin types and improve skin tone, this serum also fortifies the skin's barrier over time.
Results Oriented The Ordinary sells one bottle every 2 seconds.



U Beauty Resurfacing Compound \$228

Launched 2019
 A who's-who of skin care ingredients, Resurfacing Compound's INCI reads like an A-list. Retinol, peptides, vitamin C and hyaluronic acid are encapsulated in the brand's double-patent-pending Siren Capsule Technology to mitigate irritation and only target damaged cells.
Results Oriented The Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology published a white paper study on the technology that supercharges this formula, calling it a breakthrough in active ingredient delivery.



The Ordinary Soothing & Barrier Support Serum \$17

Launched 2023
 Centella asiatica, niacinamide and vitamin B12 lend their anti-redness and moisturizing properties to this pink-hued powerhouse.
Results Oriented The serum garnered more than 1 million views on TikTok within 48 hours of its first post. No wonder The Ordinary is the top serum brand in the U.S., according to the brand.



Vanicream Face Wash \$10

Launched 2013
 Meant for daily use and makeup removal, the soap-free formula is gentle enough for the most sensitive skin types.
Results Oriented A bestseller for the brand and retailers alike, the product has grown consistently since launch.



Topicals Faded \$38

Launched 2020
 Sun damage, scarring and inflammation meet their match with this formula of niacinamide, melatonin, licorice root, and kojic, azelaic and tranexamic acids.
Results Oriented The brand's top-selling product is also its most repurchased.



Violette_FR Boum-Boum Milk \$43

Launched 2021
 A three-in-one toner, serum and moisturizer, Boum-Boum Milk is comprised of 99 percent naturally derived ingredients like fermented birch sap and olive leaf extract.
Results Oriented The brand's bestseller, enough units have sold to reach the top of the Eiffel Tower 5.7 times.



Tower 28 SOS Spray \$28

Launched 2019
 Containing only three ingredients, hypochlorous acid stars in this treatment spray that boasts anti-irritant and anti-redness properties and has also been awarded a seal of acceptance from the National Eczema Association.
Results Oriented One bottle sells every 15 seconds.



Vaseline Original Healing Jelly \$1.69

Launched 1870
 Vaseline has more than 75 uses — from cuts and burns to slugging and eyebrow grooming.
Results Oriented 50 units are sold every minute.



Weleda Skin Food \$19.99

Launched 1926
 Viola tricolor, calendula and chamomile layered in oils and beeswax deliver a heavy-duty, all-purpose moisturizer.
Results Oriented Weleda sells one tube every 4 seconds globally.



Youth to the People Superfood Cleanser \$39

Launched 2015
 Intended as the topical answer to a daily green juice, kale, spinach and green tea power this pH-balanced formula.
Results Oriented The product has more than 3 million users, according to the brand.

WINNING FORMULA

Vintner's Daughter Active Botanical Serum \$195

Launched 2013

More than a decade ago, Vintner's Daughter founder April Gargiulo struck oil — literally.

The entrepreneur set out to create, as she put it, "a high-powered, multi-beneficial serum in an oil format. Most serums at that point were very targeted, and they were about a single product and a single concern. I wanted something that could tackle many skin issues in a single step."

The resulting Active Botanical Serum came to be after Gargiulo experimented with brewing whole plants, a process that drew inspiration from the world of winemaking. Still today, the key ingredient complex takes 21 days to make — enough time to drive from Gargiulo's home base of Napa to New York City five times.

While Active Botanical Serum helped kick off the craze for face oils, it took Gargiulo nearly a decade before launching another product, the Active Treatment Essence, and eventually, a cleanser. She's taken the same painstaking approach for each.

"I was new to the beauty world, and I didn't know I was being revolutionary by launching one product," said Gargiulo. She may be a beauty outsider, but the industry has embraced her approach. "This makes anyone's skin look and feel better — there's absolutely nothing like it," said one voter in The Greatest. "April is devoted to making the best product as opposed to scaling, so her quality surpasses everyone else's."

Said another, "It's a serum; it's an oil. Lots of companies have tried to copy; no one has come close."





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